

INDIANA VALUE-ADDED GRANT: IQ+BEEF

Final Report – March 2001

TITLE: *Continuation:* Indiana Quality Plus Beef (IQ+BEEF) Initiative

GOAL: To create a cooperative, team-based system that will increase the safety, wholesomeness and uniformity of beef products for the consumer, while enhancing the profitability and sustainability of Indiana beef producers.

OVERALL IQ+BEEF OBJECTIVES:

1. To improve communication among the different segments of the beef industry. Commitment to span from the seedstock producer to harvest of beef product.
2. To educate producers about management practices that will ensure a safe, wholesome, quality beef product.
3. To eliminate unnecessary duplication of vaccinations and encourage proper management practices
4. Improve ability to trace animals back through the production system for possible disease/pathogens situations by source verification.
5. To educate beef producers about: the proper utilization, storage, and administration of animal health products; product withdrawals; and proper animal handling and care techniques.
6. Implementation of best management practices to prevent the excess use of anti-microbials and biologicals.
7. Evaluate the impact of the educational programs.

NARRATIVE OF WORK COMPLETED

The need for quality assurance and enhanced communication between beef industry segments was identified by the Purdue Beef Team and a proposal was prepared to address those issues. The Purdue Team membership includes extension and production specialists from both the Department of Animal Sciences in the School of Agriculture and the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences in the School of Veterinary Medicine. This proposal was presented to representatives of the seedstock, commercial cow-calf, backgrounding and feedlot segments of the industry, as well as practicing veterinarians, Indiana Beef Cattle Association, Indiana Veterinary Medical Association, Commissioner of

Agriculture, Indiana Board of Animal Health, and livestock auction markets. Three meetings were held by this group which resulted in the formation of the Indiana Beef Team and the formalization of a new program called Indiana Quality Plus Beef (IQ+BEEF, *The Intelligent Choice*).

The new system has resulted in a paradigm shift from participating producers viewing themselves as animal producers to that of food producers. The state wide education network, collaborating with both partners and stakeholders, has utilized the resources made available through the first contract with FSIS, which we will call Phase I, and has continued under the current FSIS contract, which we will call Phase II. In Phase I we begin training participants on how to successfully contribute to the new system. This educational effort has included refinement of management practices and strategies that will optimize total system performance and maximize end-product quality and safety.

In Phase I a color promotional brochure was created that outlined in detail the advantages to the cow-calf producer, cattle feeder and consumer, as well as requirements to participate in the IQ+BEEF program. The IQ+BEEF Initiative had as it's centerpiece the education and certification of Indiana veterinarians and beef producers in quality assurance. Educational materials and fact sheets were created to assist with base-level learning and decision making in the coordinated system. The fact sheets were created and compiled into a three ring IQ+BEEF Certified Beef Producers Manual and training overlays to help standardize the certification of producers and veterinarians across the state. The Purdue Beef Team was responsible for creating the "train-the-trainer" materials, session and certifying trainers on the Purdue campus. (Please refer to 1999 Final Report to FSIS for copies of these materials, if interested.) At least one veterinarian and one extension educator from each of eight regions around the state were identified and certified as "trainers" to conduct additional training sessions and to certify producers in quality assurance issues across the state. Training utilized the newly created training manual and overlays, along with the educational displays on quality assurance leased from the Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association. On July 1, 1999 the program certified 53 IQ+BEEF Trainers consisting of veterinarians, extension educators, and industry professionals.

To date, a total of 14 formal IQ+BEEF certification training sessions (10 in Phase II), numerous small sessions conducted by trainers around the state for local clientele, and an IHETS (Indiana Higher Education Telecommunication System) satellite program broadcast statewide have been conducted. During the IHETS program, a video-tape was made that is now being utilized by producers in a home study format along with the Certified Beef Producer Manual. A web-based educational module is currently being developed for distance learning that includes the option of certification examination on-line. To date, a total of 402 beef producers (355 in Phase II) and 70 veterinarians (27 in Phase II) have met

the requirements and have become IQ+BEEF Certified. A web site containing IQ+BEEF background information; program requirements; certified trainer, producer, and veterinary names; sale dates, etc., has been created and is maintained on the Department of Animal Sciences' server (http://www.ansc.purdue.edu/IQBEEF/home_page.htm).

A total of 3500 uniquely numbered IQ+BEEF tags were sold to Certified Veterinarians prior to December 31, 1999. A total of 4500 additional tags have been sold to date this year (total = 8000 since July 1, 1999). A survey of certified producers and veterinarians is currently being conducted to identify how many calves have actually been processed, problems encountered, health and performance information, how calves were marketed, and perceived or real premiums received at the time of sale.

A unique aspect of the IQ+BEEF program is the shared responsibility for the program's success between the producer and his/her local veterinarian. When the producer is certified, the veterinarian knows that all injections and procedures will be performed correctly on the cattle. The Certified Veterinarian is responsible for oversight of the producers' procedures, certifying that all procedures have been performed, and that each animal has met the requirements of the program. Qualifying animals are then tagged with a uniquely numbered IQ+BEEF tag. Tags are ordered and distributed by the Indiana Veterinary Medical Association to only Certified Veterinarians. The veterinarian and producer each sign a multiple, five-copy certificate stating that the cattle meet or exceed all requirements established for the IQ+BEEF program. This certification and verification program has been well received by producers purchasing IQ+BEEF Certified calves for backgrounding and feedlot operations. This is reflected in the bids and sale transactions made on these calves (discussed below).

ROLE OF PARTNERS

Purdue University: Beef cattle specialists in the Department of Animal Sciences and the School of Veterinary Medicine constitute the Purdue Beef Team and were responsible for development, compiling and printing of the educational fact sheets, training manuals, and training overlays, as well as certification of trainers for the program. Three Quality Assurance educational displays were leased from the Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association in Phase I and used around the state. During Phase II, three educational displays were designed (two completed, third near completion) that will replace the leased displays. To date, these displays have been utilized at several workshops in Indiana, the Indiana Beef Cattle Convention, and were loaned to the Illinois Cattlemen's Association for display at the Illinois Beef Expo. Over 25,000 producers have been exposed to these displays since the first one was completed in the Spring of 2000. A bumper hitch, enclosed trailer and hitches have been purchased and will be used to

protect and transport the displays to workshops, training sessions, expositions, and shows in the region. A contractor has completed the addition of the roller track and the interior of the trailer that will facilitate loading and unloading, as well as protect the displays during transport. A few finishing touches are being made to the display to keep current with the industry. The displays will continue to be updated as needed for different events and educational opportunities. The displays are scheduled for four different events in the first three months of the new calendar year, in addition to the 2001 Farm Progress Show to be held in Indiana.

Indiana Beef Cattle Association: The IBCA has played an active role in assisting with the education and training necessary for the certification program delivery, as well as leveraging resources to facilitate the exchange of information. The IBCA has served as a partner by co-sponsoring producer meetings, providing opportunities to present summaries and updates at meetings and providing grassroots involvement in the operation and leadership of the IQ+BEEF program. Articles and promotion of the program have been included in the Indiana Beef magazine. Additionally, IBCA has been instrumental in designing (phase I) and mailing (Phases I and II) certificates and farm gate signs for Certified Producers and Veterinarians, as well as auction market posters. Furthermore, producer certification training sessions were conducted at the IBCA sponsored Hoosier Beef Congress in December 1999 and the Indiana Beef Cattle Convention in February 2000.

Indiana Board of Animal Health: Indiana BOAH has assisted with the development and implementation of the program by adding their expertise to fact sheets for the training manuals, creation of certification guidelines for producers, and validating accuracy of items dealing with state laws.

Indiana Board of Public Health: Indiana BOPH has helped by providing support for the program and increasing awareness of the efforts set forth by the beef producers.

Indiana Veterinary Medical Association: The IVMA has provided support staff to order, maintain inventory, and distribute IQ+BEEF tags to IQ+BEEF Certified Veterinarians. The IVMA has taken responsibility for making sure veterinarians comply with program requirements and the annual renewal (or denial) of Veterinary Certification.

Marketing Organizations: Livestock auction markets have provided services that assist with product flow into feedlots and the processor. They have assisted in the promotion of the program through special IQ+BEEF sales that have taken place this past fall and winter. Results of these sales (numbers of cattle, weights, price received, health status in the feedyard, etc.) are currently being collected by survey of producers and veterinarians. Nine IQ+BEEF sales are currently

scheduled for the fall of 2000. Interestingly, two of these sales are outside the border of Indiana (Milford, IL and Eaton, OH).

Stakeholders: Beef producers (n=402) have participated in the educational programs and certification training sessions offered in various locations throughout the state. Additionally, stakeholders have agreed to implement and utilize the IQ+BEEF protocols for identification, health, quality assurance and management practices, as well as share information with other beef producers and segments of the industry. . We have complete data on two of the largest special sales held to date and the results indicate that IQ+BEEF Certified calves sold for a \$4.45/cwt premium to non-certified calves of the same class and weight. We also have complete performance data from several producers during the 30+ day post-weaning period required by the program. Data indicate that calves gained 1.48 to over 2.50 pounds per day. This post-weaning gain added 45-75 pounds to sale weights and collectively netted producers over \$30 per head profit. One interesting comment from a producer who attended a special sale was that they thought the sale was cancelled when they arrived because they did not hear any bawling calves. One benefit of this program has been that IQ+BEEF Certified calves appear to undergo less stress in the livestock market facility than their freshly weaned counterparts.